

Minutes: Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC)

August 25, 2011

Working sessions: 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Council Meeting: 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

The Cornhusker Hotel, Lancaster Room; Lincoln, Nebraska

Heather Gill, chair, opened the dinner meeting of the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council at 6:30 p.m. on August 25, 2011 at the Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, Nebraska. Heather noted the posting of a copy of the Open Meetings Act. Those in attendance made self introductions.

Members present: Mike Adams, Rebecca Bimler, Annie Bruns, Pam Dobrovolny, Carol Fichter, Heather Gill, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, Sian Jones-Jobst, Eleanor Kirkland, Diane Lewis, Carol McClain, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christy Pelton, Roger Reikofski, Deb Ross, Julie Rother, DeAnna Schulze, Carolyn Thiele, Joyce Thomas, Salene Ulrich, Cristen Witte, Linda Zinke

Members absent: Sue Adams, Eric Dunning, Cheryl Hammond, J.P. Holys, Heather Krieger, Julie Middendorf, Pete Pirsch, Todd Reckling, Leisha Suckstorf

Also in attendance: *ECICC Staff:* Terry Rohren, facilitator; Susan Dahm, secretary; *Technical Assistants:* National Child Care Information Center–Rae Anderson; Administration for Children and Families, Head Start State-based Training and Technical Assistance–Mary Finney-Afrank; PTI-Nebraska–Connie Shockley; Nebraska Children and Families Foundation–Beaky Veak; NDHHS–Lynne Brehm, Shirley Pickens-White, Sue Spanhake; NDE–Amy Bornemeier, Pat Frost, Joan Luebbers, Jan Thelen

Minutes were recorded and submitted by Susan Dahm

The Family Leadership Team held a conference call prior to the meeting. The Gaps and Barriers Committee met in a working session beginning at 5:00 p.m. before the 6:30 p.m. opening of the regular Council meeting.

MEETING AGENDA:

* = *action item*

1. Opening and Announcements:

i. Approval of minutes

- * Motion, Deb Ross; seconded, Roger Reikofski: To approve the ECICC minutes of May 13, 2011, as submitted and provided to members in the pre-meeting packet. There was no discussion.

The motion passed 23-0 by roll-call vote; there were no objections or abstentions.

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Rebecca Bimler, Annie Bruns, Pam Dobrovolny, Carol Fichter, Heather Gill, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, Sian Jones-Jobst, Eleanor Kirkland, Diane Lewis, Carol McClain, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christy Pelton, Roger Reikofski, Deb Ross, Julie Rother, DeAnna Schulze, Carolyn Thiele, Joyce Thomas, Salene Ulrich, Cristen Witte, Linda Zinke

Absent: Sue Adams, Eric Dunning, Cheryl Hammond, J.P. Holys, Heather Krieger, Julie Middendorf, Pete Pirsch, Todd Reckling, Leisha Suckstorf

ii. Steering Committee vote

Heather Gill asked members to submit their written ballots to elect a new Steering Committee member. Sian Jones-Jobst and DeAnna Schulze were nominated for the member-at-large position. Terry Rohren tabulated the ballots and announced the election of Sian Jones-Jobst. Final count of the ballots was: 23 ballots submitted–13 votes for Sian Jones-Jobst, 10 votes for DeAnna Schulze.

iii. Retiring members

Heather Gill asked members whose terms are ending at the end of September to stand and be recognized. She thanked them for their service to the Council and to the young children of Nebraska. Members who are retiring from the Council are: Carol Fichter, Julie Middendorf, Leisha Suckstorf, Joyce Thomas, and Linda Zinke.

iv. Discussion of possible actions items**a. By-Laws review and revision**

The ECICC By-Laws were last revised in 2002. Some members have suggested that the By-Laws should be reviewed and possibly revised. Heather Gill asked for input from Council members. Carol McClain suggested that a procedural or policy manual might serve as guidance for how the current By-Laws are interpreted. Pam Dobrovolny noted that the By-Laws do not accurately reflect what we do and the current committee structure and proposed that it would be timely to look at whether changes are needed.

* Motion, Pam Dobrovolny; second, Eleanor Kirkland: to establish a group to review the By-Laws and bring recommendations for changes back to the Council.

The motion passed by roll-call vote: 23-0. There were no objections or abstentions.

Voting yes: Mike Adams, Rebecca Bimler, Annie Bruns, Pam Dobrovolny, Carol Fichter, Heather Gill, Jane Happe, Melody Hobson, Sian Jones-Jobst, Eleanor Kirkland, Diane Lewis, Carol McClain, Dawn Mollenkopf, Christy Pelton, Roger Reikofski, Deb Ross, Julie Rother, DeAnna Schulze, Carolyn Thiele, Joyce Thomas, Salene Ulrich, Cristen Witte, Linda Zinke

Absent: Sue Adams, Eric Dunning, Cheryl Hammond, J.P. Holys, Heather Krieger, Julie Middendorf, Pete Pirsch, Todd Reckling, Leisha Suckstorf

Persons interested in helping with the review of the By-Laws should talk to Terry Rohren.

b. Charter proposal from the Family Leadership Team (FLT)

On behalf of the Family Leadership Team, DeAnna Schulze presented notes for a draft charter that would officially create an ECICC standing committee to focus on family issues. Printed copy was provided to meeting participants in the meeting packet. DeAnna explained that the charter was modeled from the Gaps and Barriers Committee (GBC) charter. She asked for input and suggestions from meeting participants.

Terry Rohren expressed concern about the “creating legislation” phrase in the draft notes. Eleanor Kirkland observed that an ECICC committee is limited to researching issues and making recommendations for action to the Council. Other expressions of concerns included:

- possible duplication of effort/role with the GBC;
- maintaining a parent representation/voice across all ECICC committees;
- the need to purposefully address issues for all children;
- aligning the process with the ECICC By-Laws; and,
- the group’s intent to relate or align issues with the strategies outlined in the Report to the Governor.

DeAnna asked Council members to e-mail Connie Shockley with other suggestions. The FLT will consider the suggestions and continue to finalize a draft charter to submit to the Council before the next meeting.

* DeAnna requested consideration of the draft charter as an action item for the next meeting. Heather Gill acknowledged the request and encouraged members to give additional response to Connie or Terry Rohren.

2. Reports from Working Sessions

a. Gaps and Barriers Committee (GBC)

Pam Dobrovolsky, chair of Gaps and Barriers Committee, reported that GBC members had identified and discussed regional concerns about lack of mediators, A&D waiver mileage reimbursement problems, a need for home day-care provider supports, and a request for strategies to involve families in Planning Region Team meetings and activities. This was followed by continued discussion of survey responses to issues identified from Planning Region Teams' annual reports. The group also discussed ways to better inform medical personnel about Early Intervention services. Sian Jones-Jobst explained issues from the physician's perspective. Lynne Brehm briefed the group on a promising model of parent consultants in physicians' offices. Julie Rother encouraged contact and partnering with local health departments to distribute needed information.

b. Early Childhood Systems Team (ECST)

Eleanor Kirkland referred meeting participants to the minutes of the Early Childhood Systems Team provided in the meeting packets. She briefly reviewed the past work of the team as it related to the Report to the Governor and the State Advisory Council (SAC) grant awarded to Nebraska/ECICC from federal stimulus funds. She reminded the group about the two priorities identified by ECICC for the grant—school readiness, and a unified early childhood data system.

The ECST has reviewed output from the ECICC Data Summit held June 1, 2011 and prioritized questions posed by summit participants. These are helping to inform Nebraska's current work on a funding application for the Early Childhood Race to the Top (RTTT) federal initiative. Members of the ECST will provide support and input for the RTTT application. The next meeting of the ECST is October 12.

Eleanor announced that Becky Veak will serve as co-chair of the ECST. Becky briefly talked about her role at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF) and with First Five Nebraska, a new structure within NCFF to focus and coordinate work related to children ages birth to five. Heather encouraged everyone to learn more about First Five Nebraska from their website: <http://www.firstfive-nebraska.com/>.

3. Public Comment:

Salene Ulrich briefly informed the group about the Early Intervention Family Alliance (EIFA) and provided two information pieces in the meeting packets. She asked if the Nebraska ECICC could pay dues for a 2-year organizational membership to allow ECICC members to participate in the EIFA.

* Because no action may be taken during public comment, the request was referred to the Steering Committee.

4. OSEP visit and OSEP Mega Conference

Pam Dobrovolsky, ECICC vice chair, and several ECICC parent representatives attended the OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs) Mega Conference held in Washington DC earlier in August. Pam said it was interesting to hear perspectives from the ICCs of other states, especially as it related to the federal language "to advise and assist," and that she learned it is not our role to advocate. She also talked about councils that have done away with committee structures and instead use task forces with a specific charge and timeline to address issues. Additionally there was talk about the importance of consistency on ICCs, which some states have solved by extending member terms. Many ICCs regularly have retreats to allow time for in-depth planning and work. (Also see # 7 below.)

5. Early Childhood Race to the Top Learning Challenge

Melody Hobson and Betty Medinger informed the Council about Nebraska's plan to submit an application in the federal Early Childhood Race to the Top Learning Challenge. Nebraska may apply for up to \$50 million (over 4 years), an amount based on relative population of low-income young children. The Governor has designated the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) as the lead agency. Betty Medinger will facilitate the grant application with state and private agencies and organizations partnering in the process, including the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Buffet Early Childhood Institute. The application deadline is October 19, 2011. Grant awards will be announced in December 2011.

Melody reviewed the selection criteria and the various sections of the application for funding, which was covered in a handout provided to members in the meeting packet. A grant writer will be hired to write the grant that will be drafted by teams working on various sections. Melody asked for interested ECICC members, especially parents, to volunteer to help with reviewing the draft sections and the final grant application.

- * Persons interested in helping with the reviews should contact Susan Dahm, who will forward names to Betty Medinger.

ECICC will need to sign in support of the grant submission. Melody asked for a motion to allow this to happen before the next Council meeting.

- * Motion, Deb Ross; second, Linda Zinke: to allow Heather Gill, ECICC chair, to sign on behalf of ECICC in support of the grant submission.

The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. There were no objections or abstentions.

6. School Readiness Update

Amy Bornemeier recapped her prior presentation at the last ECICC meeting about the School Readiness Project and provided a handout updating members on her activities since then. She described different perspectives for definitions of readiness and the need for strategies to support collaboration between families, schools, and communities to prepare children for school readiness. Amy emphasized that ECICC is her advisory body in this work and she asked for volunteers representing ECICC's various committees to act as an advisory sub-group to make recommendations on resources, decisions, and next steps.

- * Volunteers included Carolyn Thiele, Jane Happe, Sian Jones-Jobst, Cristen Witte, and Rebecca Bimler. Others who are interested in serving on the advisory sub-group should contact Amy.

Amy asked for reaction to the last bullet on the handout: "What resources are needed to fulfill this vision. . ." Members responded with ideas about community-centered support and local control opportunities. Carol McClain suggested that Amy tap into social service organizations to obtain their support and input. Eleanor noted that the grant funding for this work is until August 31, 2013.

Heather encouraged members to invite Amy to regional/local meetings and Planning Region Team events to talk about this work.

7. OSEP Visit

Carol McClain noted that the topic of the OSEP visit was not covered as planned for earlier in the agenda. She briefly explained about the expected federal visit to the NDE Office of Special Education in September, and alerted the group to a parent survey that OSEP requires prior to their visit. The survey was distributed and collected by PTI-Nebraska. Connie Shockley will forward the survey to Susan to distribute to ECICC members via e-mail. [The survey also may be found at: <http://pti-nebraska.org/?p=484>.].

8. Next meeting agenda items

Items proposed for the next meeting include:

- Steering Committee recommendation on EIFA
- Family Leadership Team recommendation for a family committee charter: to discuss and motion to approve.
- By-Laws—consider recommendations from review committee
- Buffet Early Childhood Institute-presentation
- Early Learning Connection-presentation on recent changes
- Results of UNMC parent survey regarding their ability to access quality child care for children with special needs-presentation
- Early Childhood System of Care (Cristen Witte, Carolyn Thiele, Heather Gill)

- * Motion to adjourn: Carolyn Thiele, second, Carol Fichter. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. With a reminder about the ECICC retreat the next day (Friday, August 26), the Council adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Next regular meeting: December 2, 2011, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln, NE

MEETING HANDOUTS:

- ✓ ECICC Updates, August 25, 2011
- ✓ Ballot: Vote for Steering Committee member-at-large
- ✓ List: ECICC member preferences for committees
- ✓ Minutes: Steering Committee, July 25, 2011
- ✓ Minutes: Steering Committee, August 19, 2011
- ✓ Minutes: Early Childhood Systems Team, July 13, 2011
- ✓ Draft notes: Family Leadership Team charter
- ✓ ECICC By-Laws, revised November 15, 2002
- ✓ Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge: Summary of Draft Requirements, Priorities, and Selection Criteria
- ✓ School Readiness Project Update
- ✓ Laws, Statutes & Regulations supporting the work of the Nebraska ECICC, updated August 2011
- ✓ Results Matter Nebraska—Child, Program and Family Outcomes Technical Assistance Document, updated August 2011
- ✓ Brochure: Early Intervention Family Alliance (EIFA)
- ✓ Letter—to EIFA members